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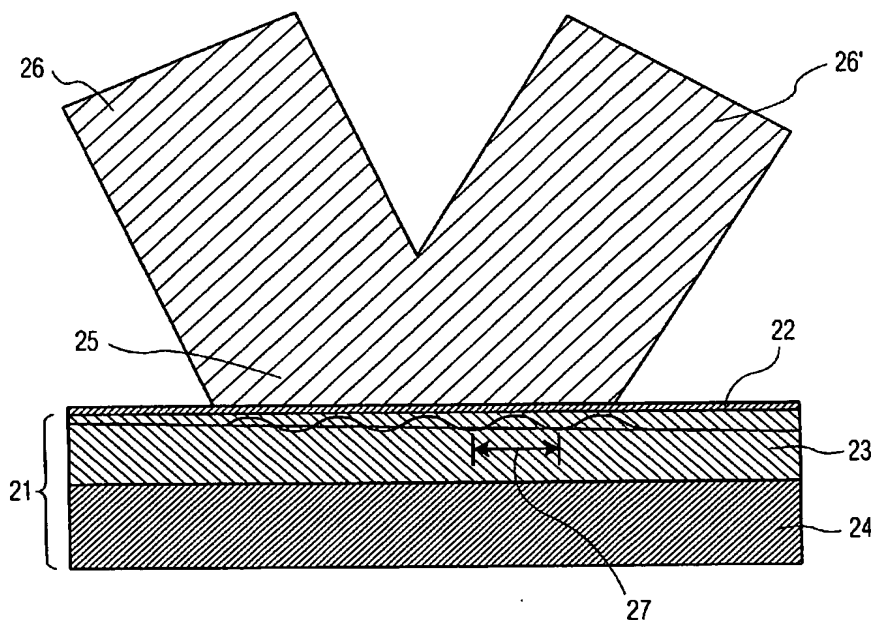
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(54) Title: METHOD FOR MEASURING THIN FILMS



(57) Abstract: The present invention provides a new method of laser-based metrology of very thin solid films (22) based on the generation of the refractive index grating in the gas or liquid medium in contact with the film (22). In a primary embodiment, excited acoustic waves (25) in the gas or liquid medium modulate an intensity of the diffracted probe beam resulting in a low-frequency component of the signal compared to the frequencies of the acoustic modes excited in the solid sample. Amplitude of this low-frequency component is correlated with the amount of energy absorbed by the film (22), and, consequently, with the film thickness, which provides a method for film thickness measurement as well as for a detection of a metal film on a dielectric underlayer.

**Declarations under Rule 4.17:**

- as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii)) for the following designations AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW, ARIPO patent (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT,

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